



June 2011

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# Consulate Quarterly

*News and information for the American community in northern Thailand  
from the U.S. Consulate General in Chiang Mai*

## Message from Consul General Susan N. Stevenson

Living overseas, we sometimes lose track of American holidays. When is President's Day? Flag Day? We don't miss them amid the many new festivals we can celebrate here in Thailand. But there is one American holiday that we don't forget: The Fourth of July.

In other cities around the world, the July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic is hosted by the local American business community, but there is no American Chamber of Commerce here in northern Thailand. In past years, the U.S. Consulate General was able to host a community picnic on our grounds. Unfortunately, with the growth in the number of Americans living here, we could no longer accommodate the crowds after 2008. Post-9/11 security concerns also prevented us from continuing.

The Consulate was therefore grateful for the support of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), which hosted Chiang Mai's July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic the past two years at the Chiang Mai municipal stadium. The VFW wasn't able to continue it this year, however, and searched for another organization to take the mantle.

We're very pleased that Creative Kingdom, under the leadership of CEO Eduardo Robles, has stepped up to the challenge. On July 4, 2011, Creative Kingdom is organizing a day of Americana at the Chiang Mai municipal stadium with music, dancing and fireworks. There will also be all-American food such as hot dogs, barbecued chicken and tacos catered by local restaurants. While we might not be lucky enough to be in the U.S. for July 4, the community picnic will again make you feel like you're there. (I wish I could join you, but I actually will be in the U.S. on that day, giving my children their first-ever U.S. Independence Day.)

*Happy Independence  
Day - July 4*



## Consular Section Closed for Routine Services June 30

The Consular section will be closed for **routine** services June 30, 2011. However, we are always available to assist Americans who experience emergencies, such as deaths, arrests, or serious illnesses. In such situations, please contact our American Citizen Services unit at 053-107-777.

This closure affects non-emergency services, such as passport issuance (including extra pages and picking up new passports), notary services (including those required for Thai immigration purposes), reports of birth, and federal benefits assistance (including picking up checks). For routine services, please make an appointment at our website, <http://chiangmai.usconsulate.gov/service/appointments/>.

★ PRESENTS THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION ★

**4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY 2011**

**"CHIANG MAI MUNICIPAL  
STADIUM - CHANG PUAK"**  
**2PM TO 8PM**



Creative Kingdom, the American based company with entertainment studios and offices in Chiang Mai and developers of the world-class CNXWOOD movie-world development, will once again be presenting an all day children's interactive entertainment zone. Come out and enjoy the 4th of July celebration with a fun-filled family day with food, games, jumpers, and lots of fun kid's activities, including a teen-zone!!!

Every entry-ticket  
gets you a whole day of:

Games, Activities & Entertainment  
Including: Music, Dancing and Fireworks!

**TICKETS: ADULT 160 BAHT./CHILDREN 80 BAHT.**

**HOT DOG 60.-** (We use a 100% Beef Hot Dog specially made for The Duke's on a homemade poppy seed bun.)

ITALIAN SAUSAGE 100,-  
POLISH SAUSAGE 100,-  
SMOOTHIE 50,-



STEAK - RIBS - SEAFOOD - PIZZA

SOFT TACO'S CHOICE OF CHICKEN OR BEEF 50.-  
MINI QUESADILLA CHOICE OF CHICKEN OR BEEF 60.-  
CHILI & CHIPS 100.-  
1/2 RICE & 1/2 BEANS 50.-  
CHICKEN TACUITO'S 60.-  
CHILI CHEESE FRIES 75 -



**CHICKEN & FISH NUGGET 50.-**  
**GERMAN MIXED SAUSAGE 70.-**  
 Bratwurst, Veal (big size)  
**MIXED GRILLED (BBQ)**  
**[CHICKEN, PORK, BEEF] 70.-**



## Raffle to Include Thousands of Dollars Worth of Donated Prizes

★ Extra Tents will be available for shade and or the event of rain

**Please Note: Parking is Limited**

FOR FURTHER TICKET SALES  
INFORMATION AND EVENT LOCATION,  
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
AT [www.4julychiangmai.ck Chiangmai.com](http://www.4julychiangmai.ck Chiangmai.com)



# THAI ELECTIONS ON JULY 3

## *Steer clear of political demonstrations*

You might have noticed a lot of campaign signs along the roads in recent weeks. That's because Thailand will hold parliamentary elections nationwide on July 3. Unfortunately, demonstrations are a feature of electoral politics here. Political demonstrations, rallies, and other gatherings could happen at any time in during the campaign season, including after election day.

There are **no** signs that foreigners are targets, and Thailand remains a very friendly place for Americans. Still, political demonstrations are unpredictable, and you don't want to be in the wrong time in the wrong place. As a reminder, the following is an excerpt from the Department of State's advice to Americans in Thailand ([http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1040.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1040.html)):

The Department of State advises all U.S. citizens residing in or traveling to Thailand to monitor events closely, to avoid any large public gatherings, and to exercise discretion when traveling within the country. Political demonstrations are frequent in Thailand. Many are scheduled on the anniversary of political events, and others happen with little warning. Demonstrations can attract tens of thousands of participants and often cause severe traffic disruptions, especially if they include processions from one site to another.

If a demonstration is expected to pass near U.S. Embassy or Consulate facilities, Embassy and Consulate entrances and functions may be restricted. Demonstrations are unpredictable and can turn violent without warning. For this reason, we encourage you to monitor local media for information about possible demonstrations and to avoid the vicinity of demonstrations.



If we learn any demonstrations, we'll post the information on our website (<http://chiangmai.usconsulate.gov/>) and send an email to alert all Americans who are enrolled with the Consulate. **To make sure that you get our messages, please sign up with the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP):**

<http://chiangmai.usconsulate.gov/service/smart-traveler-enrollment-program-step.html>

## PUBLIC AUCTION

The Consulate is cleaning out its warehouse! To dispose of surplus government-owned property, we're holding a sealed-bid auction. Lots include a variety of used residential and office furnishings, computers and office equipment, exercise equipment, and appliances.

Items may be viewed from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. July 7-9, 2011 at:  
Warehouse #5, Mei-op Thaweephan Company  
363 Moo 1, Chiangmai-Lampang Road (Superhighway)  
T. Tasala, A. Muang, Chiang Mai



Interested bidders should submit sealed bids in the bid box at the warehouse during the viewing hours listed above. We will announce successful bidders at the front gate of the warehouse on July 21 and 22, 2011. For more information, please contact Khun Supranee at 081-882-3690.

## WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOUR WEBSITE?!? (redux)

In our last issue, we told you about some problems with our appointment website. We reported that our IT staff in Washington had fixed the problem that was causing the "Service Unavailable" messages some of you were seeing. Unfortunately, over the couple of weeks, others of you have been experiencing a new problem with the appointment website – it loads slowly, or not at all, and you can't make appointments.

We checked with the IT people again, and they told us that the appointment system is a victim of its own success. Too many people are trying to use it at once, overloading it. (The same system is used by Embassies and Consulates around the world.) Basically, it's like getting a "fast busy" signal when you try to telephone someone.

The IT people report that they're working to add capacity to the system so more people can use it at once. In the meantime, they suggest that, if you can't connect, wait a few minutes and try again. When there are fewer people on the system, you will be able to connect more easily.

Again, we're sorry for the inconvenience. Please keep letting us know ([acschn@state.gov](mailto:acschn@state.gov)) when you encounter problems – that's how we know to fix them.

**Why can't I just call to make an appointment?** That's a good question. And there's a good answer: resources. To provide quality service by phone, we would have to dedicate one of our staff to do nothing but handle the phone. But taking that person away from other duties would mean scheduling fewer appointments per day and making Americans wait longer for service. Instead, we use the web-based appointment system as our "scheduling robot." It allows us to more productively use our local staff to serve the many thousands of Americans who visit and live in northern Thailand.

## New Thai Legalization Office Open in Chiang Mai

For those of you who have ever had travel all the way to Bangkok just to have the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “legalize” a document, this some good news. The Ministry recently opened a legalization office at the Chiang Mai Provincial Hall. The new office offers the following services:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| • Certified genuine signature                                   | 200 baht |
| • Certified true copy of document issued by Thai authorities    | 200 baht |
| • Certified true copy of civil and family registration document | 200 baht |
| • Certified translation of judicial document:                   |          |
| ○ First 100 words   | 200 baht |
| ○ Next 100 words or remainder                                   | 200 baht |

The office is open from Monday-Friday, 08:30-16:30, except official holidays. Service usually takes two work days. Service via post also is available.

**For further details, contact them at:**

Legalization Division  
Department of Consular Affairs  
Chiang Mai Provincial Hall Building  
Chotana Road, T.Chang Puek  
A. Muang, Chiang Mai 50000  
Tel.: 053-112-748, 053-112-749, or 053-112-750

**In addition, their office in Bangkok remains open:**

Legalization Division  
Department of Consular Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
123 Chaeng Wattana Road, 3rd Floor  
Tung Song Hong, Laksi, Bangkok  
Tel.: 02-575-1056 or 02-575-1057



## DIRECT DEPOSIT:

***From the U.S. Treasury, Straight to You!***

Are you tired of waiting and waiting to receive your monthly Social Security, Veterans Administration, or other U.S. federal benefit check? Do you get frustrated when the Consulate tells you that the checks haven't arrived yet?

If you sign up for Direct Deposit, the U.S. Treasury will deposit the money directly into your bank account every month. Because there is no paper check, you don't have to pick it up at the Consulate or wait for it to show up in the mail. It cannot be delayed in transit, lost, or stolen. You do not have to cash it or deposit it at the bank. Instead, the money will be in your bank account at the same time every month. Also, you don't have to worry about your check if you travel or move.

Because of these advantages, the U.S. Treasury encourages everyone who receives a monthly check from the U.S. government to sign up for Direct Deposit. We can help you with this.

For more information and to learn how to get started, visit the Federal Benefits page of our website, available at: <http://chiangmai.usconsulate.gov/service/services/federal-benefits-and-taxes/>

# Routine Consular Services in Chiang Mai

## AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES (ACS) HOURS:

- Tuesdays and Thursdays **by appointment only**.
- For additional information and to make an appointment: <http://chiangmai.usconsulate.gov/service.html>

### Selected American Citizen Services and fees:

Notary services: \$50.00 <i>including affidavits for Thai immigration, for getting married in Thailand, or to obtain a Thai driver's license</i>
Minor passport (under age of 16): \$105.00
First Adult Passport (age 16 and over): \$135.00
Adult Passport Renewal: \$110.00
Replacement for a lost or stolen passport: Adult - \$135.00; Minor - \$105.00
Consular Report of Birth Abroad (for children born to American citizens in Thailand): \$100.00

**The Consulate accepts U.S. dollars, Thai baht, and Credit cards. We cannot accept checks.**

- Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP):** We encourage American citizens living or traveling in Thailand to sign up at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. In an emergency or crisis, we will use the information you provide to locate you or pass on critical information.
- Visa Inquiries:** We **cannot** accept inquiries about visas during American Citizen Service hours. If you are an American citizen inquiring on behalf of a visa applicant, please see the Non-Immigrant Visa websites listed below or send an email to: [conschiangmai@state.gov](mailto:conschiangmai@state.gov).

## NON-IMMIGRANT VISA (NIV) HOURS:

- Mondays and Wednesdays **by appointment only**.
- For additional information and to make an appointment: <http://chiangmai.usconsulate.gov/visas.html>

## IMMIGRANT VISAS, FIANCÉE VISAS, AND GREEN CARDS:

These services are handled by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok. Please communicate directly with them by using the contact information below.

## USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION:

United States Government		
U.S. Embassy Bangkok	022-054-000	<a href="http://bangkok.usembassy.gov">http://bangkok.usembassy.gov</a>
Immigrant Visa Unit (Bangkok)	<a href="mailto:visasbkk@state.gov">visasbkk@state.gov</a>	<a href="http://bangkok.usembassy.gov/immigrant_visas.html">http://bangkok.usembassy.gov/immigrant_visas.html</a>
American Citizen Services (Bangkok)	<a href="mailto:acsbkk@state.gov">acsbkk@state.gov</a>	<a href="http://bangkok.usembassy.gov/service.html">http://bangkok.usembassy.gov/service.html</a>
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services	<a href="mailto:bkkcis.inquiries@dhs.gov">bkkcis.inquiries@dhs.gov</a>	<a href="http://uscis.gov">http://uscis.gov</a>
Electronic System for Travel Authorization (Visa Waiver Program)		<a href="https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/">https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/</a>
Internal Revenue Service (tax information and forms)		<a href="http://www.irs.gov/">http://www.irs.gov/</a>
Social Security Administration		<a href="http://www.ssa.gov">http://www.ssa.gov</a>
Adoption Information		<a href="http://adoption.state.gov">http://adoption.state.gov</a>
Thai Government		
Chiang Mai Tourist Police	1155; 053-247-317	e-mail: <a href="mailto:tourist@police.go.th">tourist@police.go.th</a>
Chiang Mai Immigration Office	053-277-510; 053-282-532	<a href="http://www.immigration.go.th">http://www.immigration.go.th</a>
Chiang Mai Customs Office	053-277-695	<a href="http://www.customs.go.th/">http://www.customs.go.th/</a>
Animal Quarantine Office	026-534-444	<a href="http://www.dld.go.th/">http://www.dld.go.th/</a>